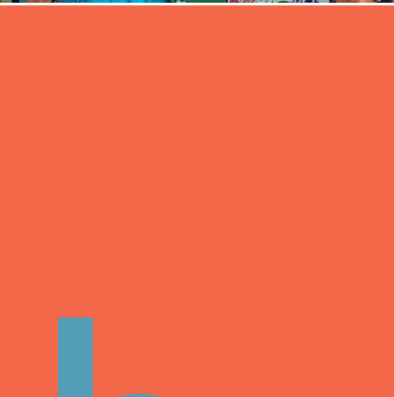
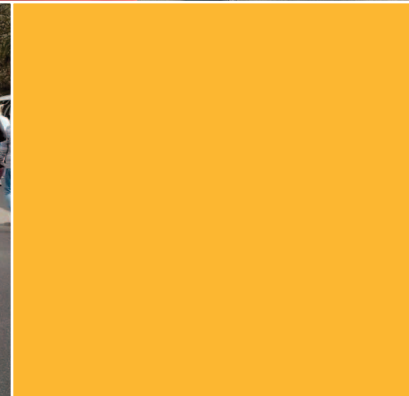




2021



Quality Account



Banyule
Community
Health

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	1
100,000 Covid-19 Tests.....	2
Supporting Community with COVID-19 Vaccination	3
Person-centred Care	4
Volunteers	6
Banyule Community Health Fun Facts	8
Olympic Village celebrates	10
Staff Profiles	11
Winner of the Walda Blow 2021 Victorian Protecting Children Award	14
30-year contribution to Banyule Community Health and the local community	15
Banyule Community Health workforce planning success story	16
Smile Squad	17
Himilo Community Connect	18
High Risk Accommodation Response	19
Lived Experience	20
Buna Reserve Community Garden	22
Feedback on Social Media.....	23
Out of Home Care Program.....	24
We Love Stories	24

Welcome



Welcome to our 2021 Quality Account. We hope you enjoy this report to our community on the work of Banyule Community Health.

At our November 2020 AGM we took the opportunity to launch our new 2020-25 Strategic Plan. We are proud to report that one year on Banyule Community Health remain focussed on its purpose - **Address inequity. Building healthy, inclusive, and just communities.**

And driven by our values – **Dignity in everything that we do. Quality matters. It takes Passion.**

Whilst Covid-19 has taken much of our focus, we are committed to the goals and directions of our strategic plan. The past year has seen a great focus on

- Recognising staff for their values-based work and ensuring our workplace has wellbeing of its staff at the forefront.
- Developing a Reconciliation Action Plan with First Nations leaders and staff. We are working towards a 2022 launch.

- Building a Diversity and Inclusion Plan to ensure we reflect the community we serve.
- Working closely with our key partners, including Austin Health, Eastern Melbourne PHN, Victorian State Government, and local councils.
- Building our information technology capacity to meet new models of work.

Banyule Community Health has been at the forefront of the Covid-19 response, delivering crucial services to our community. Banyule Community Health, like many Community Health Centres across Victoria have demonstrated its capability to engage communities through its place-based model of care, utilising its community connections, skilled staff and wrap around models of care. Inside this report you will read stories of our Covid-19 testing clinics, our response to vulnerable communities and our vaccination clinics, where our incredible staff have put clinical safety and community safety first and demonstrated the agility of Banyule Community Health.

New programs have been delivered to respond to emerging needs in our community – HeadtoHelp responding to growing mental health challenges; Jobs Advocate programs supporting young Somali–Australian community members into work; School Readiness program providing allied health support to early years services, and much more.

We pass our deepest thanks and gratitude to our community and clients, who have been incredibly patient and supportive through the many challenges presented in the past year. And finally, to our staff and volunteers who have been amazing!! Your collective skill, commitment and passion in the past year has been inspiring. We are indebted to your efforts.

Chris Deakin
Board Chair

Mick Geary
Chief Executive Officer

Banyule Community Health acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land.

Banyule Community Health hit 100,000 COVID-19 Tests.



Established in July 2020 at the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak in Victoria, the Banyule Community Health Greensborough Drive-Thru Testing site was established to meet the demand for testing in the north of Melbourne. Relocating to RMIT Bundoora East in July 2021, Banyule Community Health has worked closely with the Department of Health, Nillumbik Shire Council, Banyule City Council and the City of Whittlesea on administering 100,000+ COVID-19 Tests since commencing in July 2020

(64 weeks straight... although we were forced to closed early two afternoons – one due to a beehive and the other thunderstorms!).

Together with an engaged local community, we have reached this outstanding achievement and helped to keep our community safe.

Banyule Community Health CEO, Mick Geary commented, "I'm incredibly proud of the work that this team has done since July 2020. On a daily basis I hear of the safe, professional and friendly manner of their work". Operating 7 days a week, in rain hail or shine (sometimes all within

one day), the team from Banyule Community Health has become a source of comfort for the local community. "Our local community have supported us as we have developed improvements along the journey and staff have embraced the crucial role, they play in keeping the community safe".

Location: RMIT Bundoora East Campus Car Park – 264 Plenty Road, Mill Park



Banyule Community Health supporting community with COVID-19 vaccination



Banyule Community Health was quick to respond to the need to provide access for its local community through the establishment of a COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic. From April 2021, our West Heidelberg site has operated a daily vaccination clinic serving the local community, and provided detailed and personalised care to existing clients and many new clients keen to do what they can to keep themselves and their community safe.

Additionally, Banyule Community Health has worked with partners Your Community Health and healthAbility to provide a mobile 'in reach' and 'outreach' vaccination service to communities across the north east of Melbourne. This model provides targeted services with a focus on providing a safe engaging environment, utilising a skilled bi-cultural workforce and being delivered by a trusted Community Health provider. This model has provided crucial vaccines to

community members in The Mall in West Heidelberg, Preston Market, the Islamic Museum of Australia and a number of small community services.

With boosters a part of our future, we envisage that COVID-19 vaccination engagement will be part of our future at Banyule Community Health.

Person-centred care sees the whole person, not just their health challenges



** Details of this story have been changed to protect the privacy of our community members.*

At Banyule Community Health, we practice person-centred care. This approach acknowledges that no two people are the same, and everyone's unique circumstances matter. Person-centred care recognises the role of individuals, their family, and their community as active players in their health. It's all about seeing the whole person, not just their health challenges. This story is about Joe, a community member who came to Banyule Community Health for help but wasn't exactly sure what that help would look like.

Joe came to Australia almost 2 years ago, fleeing violence and in search of new opportunities with his daughter. Joe secured a student visa and enrolled himself in university. His daughter started attending school too, and the future looked promising!

Suddenly, Joe lost the financial support of his family overseas. He struggled to find a job and couldn't access any government

support. Joe couldn't afford vaccinations for his daughter, which meant she could not attend school. To make things worse, their housing situation became insecure, and Joe's physical health was worsening due to the stress. The family of two was really starting to lose hope.

That's when Joe contacted Banyule Community Health. He spoke with the Intake Team who listened carefully to his story so they could understand the situation. The Intake Worker explained the services available at Banyule Community Health and arranged for Joe to meet with a Social Worker. Joe's new Social Worker slowly gained his trust and eventually connected him to our 'HeadtoHelp' program.

HeadtoHelp is a free service that supports Victorians of all ages to find the best mental health support for them. Banyule Community Health is one of 15 HeadtoHelp hubs around Victoria. When a person enters the program, they speak with experienced mental health professionals who will listen and work with them to find the ideal solution for their needs.

Joe was able to find a pathway to recovery through the HeadtoHelp program, and he eventually got the mental health support he needed. Joe has been connected to a migration service and now has a settlement service that includes care of his physical health, and he's started receiving some financial support through Centrelink. Joe's daughter is back at school after catching up on her vaccinations, and the future is looking bright once again.

This was all possible through a person-centred care approach. Listening carefully to Joe and understanding the whole picture. Community members like Joe can make contact with Banyule Community Health for support every day. Their stories, their experience and their voice teach us to recognise that everyone is unique, and everyone's definition of health will be different. We wish Joe and his daughter all the best for their future.



Volunteers

National Volunteer Week 2021

Earlier this year, we took the opportunity to celebrate our incredible volunteers during National Volunteer Week.

Volunteers play such a vital role in our services, and without them we could not be a truly community-led organisation. We are so grateful for every person that has volunteered their time and energy to help us out. No matter how, when, or why they contribute, it all makes a difference.

This year's theme for National Volunteer

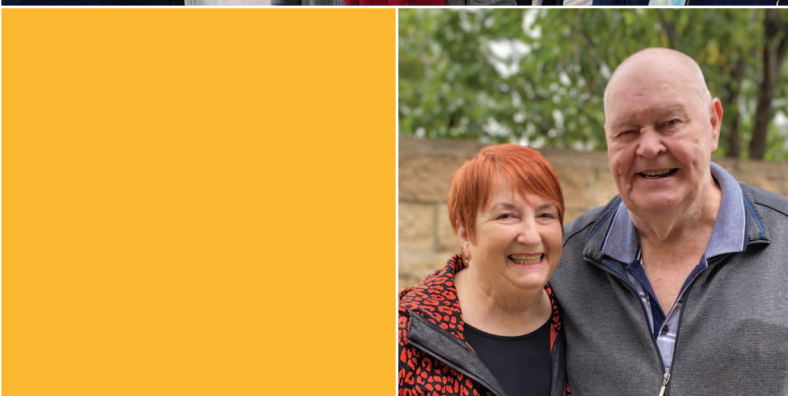
Week was "recognise, reconnect, reimagine." Our volunteers live these values. They recognise the needs of their community. They are reconnecting after spending much time apart. They reimagine a brighter future together.

On behalf of the Board and staff at Banyule Community Health, we salute and thank all our volunteers for their important work. We deeply appreciate your passion, commitment, and energy.



For more information about volunteering at Banyule Community Health click on the following link

<https://bchs.org.au/getinvolved/volunteer-with-us/>



Roslyn Brown

Diabetes Victoria 2021 Outstanding Contribution – Lived Experience with Diabetes Award.



Congratulations to Roslyn Brown, who received the Diabetes Victoria 2021 Outstanding Contribution – Lived Experience with Diabetes Award.

There are many reasons to celebrate Roslyn's brilliant work in our community. After being diagnosed with diabetes over 30 years ago, Roslyn has worked tirelessly to support others facing the challenges associated with this condition.

Roslyn has been a member of Banyule Community Health's Community Advisory Committee, providing lived experience advice to the Board. She was a founding member of Diabetes Victoria's Consumer Advisory Committee, helping to shape the Committee's development. If that wasn't enough, Roslyn also contributed to – and starred in – Diabetes Victoria's promotional video for Peer Support groups.

Currently, Roslyn is the Convenor of our Banyule Diabetes Support Group and has been involved in the group since the early 1990's. Throughout the pandemic, Roslyn's leadership was a vital support for the group and kept members connected. Her monthly newsletter has provided familiar connections for the group throughout lockdown. Group members have been sharing news, diabetes-friendly recipes, birthday celebrations, and jokes.

All at Banyule Community Health would like to congratulate Roslyn for receiving the Diabetes Victoria Inaugural 'Outstanding Contribution – Lived Experience with Diabetes Award'. A great recognition of Roslyn's lived experience voice making a meaningful contribution to improve the lives of other Victorians affected by diabetes.



Banyule Community Health

'FUN FACTS'

Vicki Ward, the Member for Eltham, congratulated Banyule Community Health in parliament for our rapid set up of a testing site in partnership with local council, the Department of Health.

"Thank you to Banyule Community Health for their recent support of our local community [...] They tested over 2000 people, making them the most popular walk-in site in the state."

Core services

- Physiotherapists had 3,760 appointments.
- Podiatry saw 5,190 community members.
- Our Occupational Therapists had 1,070 appointments.
- The Dental Team had 8,298 appointments.
- There has been a 20% increase in demand for Speech Therapy services with 1,028 appointments this year.
- Our Carer Support Workers saw 64 community members over 880 hours of direct service delivery throughout 2020-2021.
- Over 400 appointments were offered in the Hepatitis C clinic, with 112 new clients enrolled for treatment, with a further 71 clients completing their treatment.

LIFT Program

- The LIFT team have had over 4,000 appointments for two years in a row, with 4,094 in the past 12 months.
- 90% of the people who accessed the LIFT program also had their physical health screened, so they could be connected to other services at Banyule Community Health if required.
- Emergency Relief Case Workers also provided 1,523 appointments for people experiencing a mental health crisis.
- Alcohol & Drug Peer Support Workers have had a 157% increase in appointments compared to the previous year.
- Medication Support and Recovery Service (MSRS) provided 623 appointments for people overcoming substance abuse.



Social support services

- Financial counselling services increased by 24%
- The multidisciplinary School Readiness program has been successfully funded to work with 50 kindergartens across 4 LGA's in North Eastern Melbourne – Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik & Yarra.
- Our 'We Love Stories' program delivered books and posters to 5 local schools, 15 libraries and 71 kindergartens.
- Eat Well Play Well nutrition talks were transferred online in video format.
- The 3081 Angels have been working extra hard over the past 12 months, supporting 212 families in need by providing:

▪ 2 washing machines	▪ 77 prams
▪ 5 fridges	▪ 80 cans of formula
▪ 6 beds	▪ 98 bedding packs
▪ 40 Christmas food hampers	▪ 300 home cooked meals
▪ 50 bulging kids' activity packs	▪ 400 new books
▪ 55 cots and basinetts	▪ 2,000 nappies
▪ 67 car seats and capsules	▪ 17,600 items of clothing

Community groups and volunteers

- We currently have 142 volunteers working across 10 different programs, providing a total of 18,540 hours of work annually.
- Many Banyule Community Health community groups were unable to meet regularly due to COVID-19, however group conveners/facilitators continued to maintain contact with group participants via regular newsletters and phone calls.
- Banyule Men's Shed participants have stayed connected throughout the pandemic via telephone. Shed Volunteer Supervisor, Jack, commenced the 'phoning network' in March 2020 calling the men weekly just to have a chat and check how they are going. These 'check ins' have continued through to 2021.
- Banyule Diabetes Support Group participants continued to receive the monthly newsletter from Group Convenor Roslyn, sharing diabetes friendly recipes, information, jokes and birthday greetings.
- Buna Community Garden remained open throughout the pandemic and had an increase in membership numbers.
- The Community Participation Committee continued to meet online throughout 2021.
- The Women of West Heidelberg have continued to stay connected by sharing craft, cooking and gardening achievements via What's App and have continued to telephone each other to 'check in'.

Olympic Village celebrates



Banyule Community Health worked closely with community members and local primary schools to ensure a celebration of the Tokyo 2020 (held in 2021) Olympic Games. Despite being a year late and interrupted by the worldwide impact of COVID-19, a resolute commitment to celebrate the strong connection of the West Heidelberg Olympic Village remained.

Olympic Village Primary School and St Pius Primary School worked together with Banyule Community Health and the Australian Olympic Committee to host a mini-Olympics at the newly refurbished Olympic Park. Olympic legends from our local community: Charlene Rendina and Belinda Hocking were in place.

Then the lockdowns and closures hit.

Plans were adjusted, and alternative solutions put in place. A determination to explore the West Heidelberg connection to the Olympic Games and hear incredible stories of commitment and talent from two local legends, Charlene Rendina (1972 & 1976) and Belinda Hocking (2008, 2012 & 2016).

An online session was a hit – in lockdown. Missy Ali, Banyule Community Health, Health Promotion Lead, could see the real engagement, “The kids really made the most of the opportunity to speak with Charlene and Belinda. By the end of it everybody had their cameras on and couldn’t stop talking.”

“It was really heart-warming to hear the kids talk about their sporting dreams. We would’ve stayed all day if we had the chance!” says Johanna Wright, Health Promotion Officer.

Local community members used online forums and visits to key landmarks to share their Olympic Village memories – a great reminder that the West Heidelberg Olympic Village is a place of great heritage and unity.



Staff Profiles

Fiona – Mental Health Nurse (LiFT program)

Fiona is making a difference to people's lives as a Mental Health Nurse in our LiFT program. Fiona has been committed to supporting people with mental health issues for her entire adult life.

Fiona's career has moved through some generational changes, including the way the mental health sector provides care. She has worked in hospitals and intuitions and since transitioned into community and person-centred models of care. Fiona became credentialed as a Mental Health Nurse in 2009 after completing her Post Graduate studies in Mental Health Nursing at Melbourne University, which opened further opportunities.

Fiona found an opportunity with Banyule Community Health through the Mental Health Stepped Care - LiFT program. She's been with the program from the very beginning and has seen it grow and continue to expand. LiFT has pioneered the stepped care model, a holistic approach that supports people at every stage of their mental health journey. The stepped care model allows multiple healthcare workers to collaborate and find the best outcome for

every person they help. It also means you can 'step in' or 'step out' if things get better, or worse.

Fiona's work is person centred and caters to the individual needs of each person she supports. Accessing mental health services can be challenging and the LiFT team have worked to make that process a simpler approach, with no wrong door. The team is diverse, comprised of credentialed mental health nurses, social workers, psychologists, non-clinical staff, and peer support workers. There's been many special moments in the LiFT program, and Fiona says that being able to improve people's circumstances is the most rewarding part of her job.

For Fiona, the pandemic has highlighted the enormous demand for mental health services:

"So many people who have never experienced mental illness are now understanding the hardship of depression and anxiety. We're all swimming in the same stream."

Fiona practices self-care by finding activities that lift her up and doing them often. She



enjoys spending time with her five kids and was singing in a local choir before the pandemic shut it down. Music is important to Fiona and her mental health, so she has pivoted to the guitar. She's started practising with friends over video chat, they're trying to learn a new song every week. Fiona says it's important to "take advantage of opportunities and say yes more often!".

Thankyou Fiona, for helping make our community a better place.

Suada – Student Nurse, COVID testing team

Suada is a passionate frontline worker helping to keep her community safe.

Before the pandemic, Suada was working in a menswear store and studying a nursing degree. As COVID-19 spread around the world, Suada felt she had a responsibility as a future nurse to help those around her. She said goodbye to retail and looked towards community health.

Banyule Community Health gave Suada the opportunity to help her community in the fight against COVID-19, and now she works alongside our diverse team to deliver high quality testing services.

"Working at the COVID-19 testing site, and with Banyule Community Health has been a rewarding experience. It has given me the chance to expand my clinical skills and nurture my desire to help people."

"My most memorable moment working at the testing site was of the day we hit 50,000 tests. It was a strange feeling knowing that what was initially meant to be a pop-up testing site for a few months, ended up going on for almost a full year."

Suada says that "despite the circumstances, knowing that I did my part during a global pandemic is truly the most memorable part."

Just like Suada, there are hundreds of community members, staff, and volunteers helping to make Banyule Community Health a place of support during the pandemic. We can all contribute in some way, whether it's helping a neighbour with their garden or booking your family member a vaccination appointment. We're still here for you in lockdown, so please keep



your appointments or call us if you need support.

Thank you to Suada and our Banyule Community Health testing team.

Staff Profiles

Fay – Referral and intake

If you've ever given us a call, you might have spoken with Fay!

Fay works in the 'engine room' of Banyule Community Health, where she organises all the new community members coming to our service. Fay and her team approach every person with open ears, and listen carefully to their needs so that they can help direct them to the right services.

The engine room is a well-oiled machine, and Fay helps to keep things running smoothly by ensuring that you can access all the services we provide. The Intake Team must be perceptive and listen carefully to the stories of our community members to help them as best they can.

Fay is Melbourne born and bred, and has worked in community health for a very impressive 40 years! After discovering an opportunity with Banyule Community Health, Fay hasn't looked back, and will be celebrating 16 years with us in January 2022.

"Coming to work has always been a pleasure

for me. I've always seen myself as a caregiver, and I've always wanted to work with people. Working in referral and intake has given me the opportunity to connect with people on a deeper level."

Fay needs to gain the trust of community members over the phone and build a rapport with them using her communication and compassion.

"I have a way of being able to extract information just through a simple conversation. No formal education can teach you how to connect and talk with people."

"It's all about giving vulnerable people the opportunity to a service that can assist their life whether it be physical or mental health support."

Fay says that simply asking: "are you okay?" can make all the difference and gives people a chance to admit that they're struggling.

In her spare time Fay enjoys catching up with her family and caring for her elderly



parents, which just goes to show that passionate and caring people like Fay never take a day off!

The Referral and Intake Team shares the highs and lows of their work, they've laughed and cried together, and they practice the same honesty amongst themselves that they offer to the community.

You'll recognise Fay by her warm smile and friendly demeanour, so don't be a stranger if you see her around!

Kelly – Occupational Therapist

4 years ago, Kelly was studying Occupational Therapy at ACU. While on a student placement at Banyule Community Health, she discovered a long-term opportunity with our Occupational Therapy team and got along so well with everyone that she didn't want to leave, so she didn't!

Fast forward to 2021 and Kelly is working with her team to support a range of people with unique challenges. Working in occupational therapy requires patience, compassion, and attention to detail. Kelly and her team demonstrate these qualities every day and strive to give every community member the best care they can offer. Kelly supports a diverse range of community members including the elderly, people living with disabilities, and everyone in between.

Kelly grew up near Vancouver, Canada, and lived in Germany for a year working as a nanny, where she cared for a child with Rett syndrome. This experience ignited her passion for supporting people with special needs. Kelly's mother is a special education teacher, so you could say that her talents run in the family.

Kelly recently picked up cricket after a colleague introduced her to the sport, and her team has since gone on to win a premiership! Not bad for her second season in the game.

"It's so good to learn something new and challenge yourself"

Working in occupational therapy allows Kelly to view the world in terms of accessibility, which means she is constantly on the lookout for ways to improve and foster equal access in the community.



"I love working in community health because of the flexibility, it works really well with our goals in occupational therapy and means we can adapt more to our clients and their needs."

Passionate people like Kelly help to make Banyule Community Health so special.

Thank you to Kelly and the Occupational Therapy team!

Anna – Lawyer, West Heidelberg Community Legal

Anna is a lawyer with the West Heidelberg Community Legal Service.

Anna's journey into law really begins with her ambitions of becoming a marine biologist. Unfortunately, that career path would involve less diving with whales, and more collecting shells and rocks. Anna quickly became bored of looking for hermit crabs, and decided to pursue her interest in the humanities. She wasted no time completing an arts degree, then took off to work a snow season in Japan! Upon her return, Anna completed a postgraduate qualification in law and found a volunteer opportunity with West Heidelberg Legal Service. Anna was lucky enough to do her student placement there too. Between her volunteering, placements, and other jobs in the legal sector, Anna developed a keen interest in helping people navigate the difficult and complicated legal system.

Things really came full circle when she found a job opportunity with the West Heidelberg Community Legal Service. Anna was already familiar with the team and knew how supportive the environment would be, so she came back! Anna says she naturally gravitated to the community sector, it always seemed like the right pathway for her. She loves problem solving, and working in law offered an opportunity to do this while interacting with people and improving their

lives. Anna says the people are what make the job special.

"You spend so much of your life at work, it's important to be around quality people. Why not make the most of it?"

Anna provides free legal support for La Trobe students, who face diverse and complex legal challenges. Students face consumer and welfare issues, accommodation challenges, and a whole range of diverse legal problems. Anna has found that many landlords and property owners take advantage of their tenants, especially international students who might be scared to raise issues due to visa concerns. Anna also supports our HRAR (High Risk Accommodation Response) team, which has been a real highlight for her.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to get out in the community and speak to people in their homes and hear their stories directly from them. Not many lawyers get to do outreach."

So many people need legal help, but there's often barriers to getting it. Anna says accessing legal assistance can be a daunting and exhausting process, particularly for people who may already be dealing with a multitude of complex life issues. Outreach allows us to connect with people in the community who would otherwise struggle to access and engage with legal support.



When she's not helping the community with their legal troubles, Anna can be found hanging out with her dog Moose – a staghound cross whippet – and her partner Tash. Moose is always helping Anna sharpen her mediation skills, by getting her in trouble with other dog owners when he steals their toys. He's a very mischievous pup! Anna plays for a local footy club, and loves to go to gigs with her mates. Throughout our lockdowns, Anna's been gardening, skating, and watching a whole lot of Survivor (she's team George, if you were wondering). When asked if she had any important messages for the community, Anna didn't hesitate: "Everybody, please get vaccinated!"

Great idea Anna, we love your work.

Zac – HRAR Project Support

Zac might be hard to spot as he's usually hiding behind a PPE gown and face shield, but you'll definitely recognize his warmth and compassion.

Before joining Banyule Community Health, Zac was working as an accountant. He was eager for an opportunity to help his community, so Zac secured a job with our High-Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR) program in 2020 and quickly joined the testing team, jumping from site to site around Banyule.

Zac says while it's hard to pinpoint a favourite memory, each day working in

HRAR is so inspiring that it's impossible to be unmotivated.

Zac believes in supporting the community that supports him, and working with our diverse testing team has been an opportunity for passionate people like Zac to deliver high quality community healthcare. When he's not keeping his community safe you'll find Zac volunteering at a local emergency food relief shelter, or spending time in nature with his partner and their dog.

Zac is a 3rd year paramedicine student – expecting to graduate in 2021 – and he hopes to work in the ambulance service, as he thrives under pressure. Working at Banyule Community Health has opened doors for Zac, and we're confident he will



continue to care for his community as his career in paramedicine unfolds.

Thank you for keeping our community safe Zac!

Kristen Munro

— Winner of the Walda Blow 2021 Victorian Protecting Children Award

Kristen Munro, Banyule Community Health Aboriginal Early Years Playgroup and Maternal Child Health Support Worker, was awarded the Walda Blow 2021 Victorian Protecting Children Award for her outstanding work in Aboriginal Early Years supported playgroups for Banyule Community Health and Banyule City Council.

Kristen joined Banyule Community Health in early 2018 as a member of our Aboriginal Health team and has been facilitating supported playgroups for First Nations families ever since. In 2021 Kristen also started working with Banyule City Council to offer similar Aboriginal-specific Early Years programs. Her dual role as an early year's worker and supported playgroup facilitator means she can walk beside families to access crucial maternal and child health, medical and allied health professionals. Kristen's work for both community organisations has been recognised by the Victorian Commissioner for Children and Young People.

"We are incredibly proud of the contribution that Kristen, a Djab Wurrung woman, is making in our local community. She truly cares for the cultural, physical, mental, and social wellbeing of the children and families she works with. Banyule Community Health are so fortunate to have such an intuitive and passionate community asset." - Mick Geary, CEO, Banyule Community Health.

The Walda Blow Award was established in partnership with the Victorian Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and

Young People, in memory of Aunty Walda Blow – a proud Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba Elder who lived her life in pursuit of equality.

In Aunty Walda's name, this Award recognises contributions of an Aboriginal person in Victoria to the safety and

wellbeing of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Congratulations on this fantastic award and recognition Kristen. Our local Banyule community is very fortunate to have such an outstanding professional caring for our young people.



Congratulations

Elischka Sageman,

Community Health Nurse/Midwife

— 30-year contribution to Banyule Community Health and the local community.

Way back in 1991, Elischka Sageman was looking for a fill in job, while she worked out her future plans. 30 years later Elischka finds herself captivated by the community that she landed in.

With no experience in Community Health, Elischka recalls “they took their chances with me” and quickly learnt about the Community Health model. “I knew when I was interviewed by 6 people including the CEO, a GP and a community member that this would be different to other jobs I had done. I was on a steep learning curve. The community taught me so much, as did the GP’s and many other staff at the Centre. There was a commitment to teach me.”

Elischka’s role developed to be a crucial part in guiding vulnerable women through pregnancies and building a community that supported families from a variety of cultures. “My time in West Heidelberg has had a profound effect on me. I’ve learnt what’s important for people: continuity of care, kindness, listening, a safe space and belonging. We do that really well at Banyule Community Health”.

Over her 30 years Elischka has always acknowledged the community as the expert. Her approach of building on people’s strengths and truly hearing their story makes her a remarkable professional and respected by all at Banyule Community Health.

Congratulations Elischka. Your colleagues and the local community thank you for your dedication, commitment, and ongoing support.



Meet Emily Wakelin, fully qualified Dental Assistant — Banyule Community Health workforce planning success story!



Two years ago, Emily Wakelin was looking for something to sink her teeth into. In 2019, she decided to undertake a Certificate III in Dental Assisting at RMIT. The 12-month course was designed to teach her about the importance of oral health, and how to support dental teams in providing quality care to a range of community members. Emily was especially looking forward to the practical component of her course, where she would gain hands-on experience in a real workplace.

After only several weeks of on-site learning, her studies were moved online due to COVID-19 lockdowns and Emily was thrown into home learning. Despite these difficult circumstances, Emily was determined to complete her course.

In August of 2019, Emily was offered a

traineeship with Banyule Community Health, where she was welcomed with open arms (and mouths). Within weeks, Emily was providing supervised Dental Assistance to the community!

With the help of our Senior Dental Assistants and Oral Health Educators, Emily has developed a wide array of dental knowledge. She has been able to use her understanding of oral health to provide community members with insights and quality advice on caring for their teeth. You can often find Emily working in the sterilization room, one of the many valuable skills she has picked up on her journey.

Emily completed her traineeship in 2021, and now works full-time with the dental team as a qualified Dental Assistant – which is a great reason to smile!

Emily's journey certainly had its challenges, but she was persistent and took advantage of the opportunities available to her. Things have really come full circle for Emily, as she now works to support other dental students who are learning about the importance of oral health and delivering quality service with a smile.

"Emily has developed some terrific skills and built herself a career at Banyule Community Health. Her enthusiasm and new skills are a great addition to our team." – Mare Marinelli, Acting General Manager – Oral Health.

Congratulations Emily, you have come so far, and we are proud to have you as part of our team.



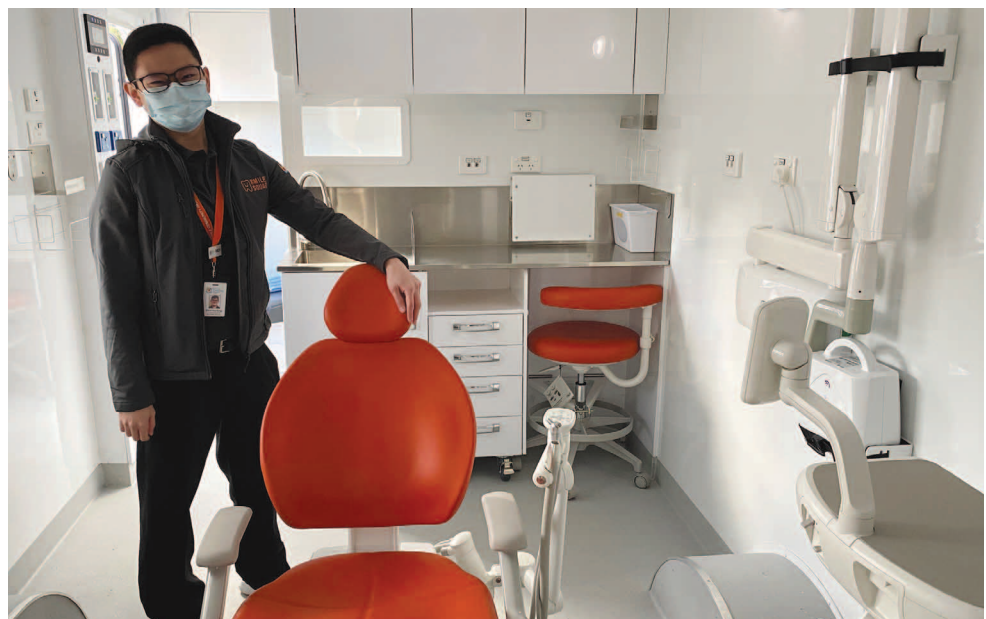
Smile Squad is here!

You may have noticed a big orange van in our carpark, that's the Smile Squad van! The Smile Squad Program launched in Victoria in 2020 providing free annual check-ups and follow up care to Victorian public primary and secondary school students. The Banyule Community Health Oral Health team started delivering the Smile Squad in July 2021 and over the coming months plans to connect with over 20 schools throughout Banyule.

The dental team has been fortunate to participate in training sessions on how to set up and use the new equipment and vans, even throughout lockdown! They have had onsite visits from the Smile Squad training facilitators as well as online Zoom training sessions to help them learn everything they need to know.

"We have been working hard to get Smile Squad up and running, there's been lots to learn and it's exciting to see it come to fruition!" – Dental Assistant Emily

This new initiative builds on decades of partnership work with local schools, with a focus on health and wellbeing. The Smile Squad is additional to the Smiles 4 Miles program that work with local early years services to embed health promotion activities.



Himilo Community Connect

New Himilo Jobs Advocate Program

Himilo Community Connect is a community-led program that aims to improve education, employment, health, and social inclusion for the Somali community of West Heidelberg. 'Himilo' is a Somali word that translates to 'positive aspirations' in English, a phrase that captures the purpose of Himilo Community Connect.

Himilo has been a crucial resource in supporting the Department of Health in engaging and supporting community through the COVID-19 Pandemic. The capacity to provide tailored, culturally appropriate and targeted messages to community has been highly regarded.

In the past year, a new program, the Himilo Jobs Advocate program has been instrumental in assisting Somali-Australian community members into employment. Nicole Parker, the new Himilo Jobs Advocate worker, assisted over 75 people into gainful employment.

"Himilo Jobs Program enabled me to develop the confidence and workplace skills required to find and keep a full time job" said one of the female participants. "I faced significant employment barriers for five years and the support, mentoring and practical advice Nicole provided to me made a world of difference" she said.

Through its COVID-19 response, Banyule Community Health has employed over 30 new young Somali-Australian community members in a range of roles from nursing to community engagement. CEO, Mick Geary stated, "The silver lining of the COVID-19 experience has been the incredible new talent that has emerged. Himilo Jobs Advocate has been a pathway to employment for many and will lead to the staff having long and valued careers in health".



Banyule Community Health's High Risk Accommodation Response

Raj, a 25-year-old West Heidelberg rooming house resident, was one of hundreds of Banyule residents who answered a knock at the door from Banyule Community Health's High Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR) team this year.

Raj had lost his casual job because of COVID. He had fallen behind in rent and was struggling to afford necessities. His rooming house owner was threatening eviction. Raj said he had been experiencing depression and anxiety and rarely left his room.

Since its roll-out, Banyule Community Health's HRAR team has managed the risks and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing wrap-around support to residents in public and community housing and rooming houses like Raj's. Higher density living conditions,

poor ventilation and shared facilities characteristic of these types of accommodation increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Our HRAR team has visited residents at around 500 high risk settings to provide public health information about COVID safety and vaccines, to deliver masks, sanitiser and other material aid, including vouchers, care packages and activity packs for kids.

When the team knocked on the door of Faduma's public housing unit, a bi-lingual outreach worker asked how she was going. Faduma said she was struggling to cope with four children at home throughout lockdown. The team arranged for kids' activity packs to be dropped at Faduma's house the next day and ensured that Faduma and her family were connected with online community

supports offered through Himilo Community Connect.

Key to the effectiveness of the HRAR model has been building an outreach team that is responsive to the Banyule community, including having a West Heidelberg Community Legal lawyer embedded in the outreach team. This has helped "to put a face to the job", as one team member said reflecting on how it can be intimidating to contact a lawyer.

For Raj, contact with the HRAR team meant that he had a lawyer representing him at VCAT to prevent his eviction into homelessness. He was connected to emergency relief, the medical practice and the financial counselling team.

For the Banyule Community Health's HRAR team, combining health, legal and social supports, is the theory behind integrated support in action.



Gamblers Help – Peer Support Group

Lived Experience

Banyule Community Health has been increasing access to peer support in recent years, recognising how helpful it can be to speak with others who have shared the same experiences. Ian and Margie work together to support community members who are suffering from gambling harm. With their own lived experience of gambling addiction, they facilitate the Gambling Harm Recovery Group, a peer support and education group program.

Both Ian and Margie overcame their own gambling addictions with the assistance of peer support. Ian highlights the importance of 'taking in the bigger picture' of people's gambling challenges and seeing the whole person, not just their addiction. Margie uses her own lived experience to coordinate support for people who are really struggling. She recognises the value of the Gambling Harm Recovery Group, knowing that everyone is taking something valuable away from their time together. Every group has different dynamics and personalities, but Margie finds that people are always united by their challenges.



*"There's people who are nearly reformed, people who are fluctuating, people who are yet to try to move on, so **it shows you where you can get to. And if you fall back that's ok too.**"*
— participant

The Gambling Harm Recovery Group is proud to hold no judgements about anyone in the group and encourages people to speak their mind – because it's a safe space. Margie and Ian work to build trust with participants and create a comfortable environment. Both Ian and Margie talk about the loss of identity that can occur with gambling, and their work is

all about restoring a person's 'true self'. People are in the group because they want to make a change and Ian and Margie can show them that it is possible to do so.

The Gambling Harm Recovery Group meets weekly for an 8-week program. After this period, people can opt-in for a



weekly check-in group. The ongoing support can be really helpful, and many people form lasting friendships in the group. Keeping in touch with one-another can be a huge help in recovery, especially when others understand the journey well.

"We really connected - I feel like I've made some new friends." – participant

Ian says "seeing the transformation over the 8 weeks is like comparing chalk and cheese. People often enter the program quiet and apprehensive only to share their stories and leave with their heads

held high after having made new connections with people on similar journeys". Having heard people's stories for over 20 years, Margie says most people describe a sense of loss from their gambling. "People think gambling is about winning, but it's really about losing".

"A lot of people here are doing better than me in terms of not gambling, but I don't feel ashamed. I'm almost a bit proud to say I don't feel that urge to chase losses now." - participant

The Gambling Harm Recovery Group works to reduce the stigma associated with gambling harm. Gambling is often 'invisible', even to close loved-ones and friends, so it can be much harder to notice. The invisibility of gambling harm can lead to people keeping their struggles to themselves until people are facing significant struggles with their income, employment, housing and relationships. Ian knows that he and Margie make an impact. "Gambling harm often goes unseen, and that's why it's important to have people with experience as the face of recovery".

"Big lesson learnt: I do have support around me. I'm not alone" - participant



Peer Support models help people to connect with others who are facing similar challenges and encourages them to share openly and practice acceptance. Incorporating lived experience is all about inspiring people and helping them believe that change is possible. Both Ian and Margie agree that the peer education model works best, especially for people with lived experience of gambling harm.



A flourishing year for Buna Reserve Community Garden



It's been a big year of growth for the Buna Reserve Community Garden!

In Buna Reserve, you'll find a community garden for learning, skill sharing, and growth of all kinds. The garden was used more frequently during our recent lockdowns, compared to last year. One avid gardener brought in their child several times each week, to do some 'hands-on' home schooling – the garden is a brilliant learning environment.

Avril Lunken is a local community member who has taken care of the garden's day-to-day operations for the past 4 years. She says the garden offers a place for people to come together, giving everyone a sense of connection to their community. Avril says gardening is a source of support for people's mental

health, and allows community members to contribute to the valuable biodiversity in their own backyard.

"Gardening has every benefit you could imagine, and it's just nice to see the plants grow over time, and see how different they all are."

Avril signed up a bunch of new members throughout August and September, and has made sure that everyone has something to work on. New and old members have been working hard to produce a wonderful variety of fruit, vegetables, and even some edible weeds. They've also built a network of paths around the garden, and taken care of the weeds. People from all walks of life are welcome at Buna Reserve Community Garden, whether you're a family, a parent, a child, or somewhere in-between.

However, some guests are not so welcome – the snails! The gardeners can collect several kilograms of snails each day, which they give to a local reptile-keeper, and some nearby families with ducks. The gardeners are looking forward to a few different projects in the future. They have some more pathways to build, and they're planning a border of indigenous plants around the garden.

The gardeners pride themselves on cultivating a safe and harmonious community space where anyone can develop friendships and grow their own food. If you're interested in joining the Buna Reserve Community Garden, send an email to: bunagarden@gmail.com

Feedback on social media

Our social media pages are always buzzing with information, pictures, and videos. They're also places where community members can ask questions or provide feedback on Banyule Community Health services. We appreciate your feedback, and do our best to take it onboard and improve the way we operate.

Most of us have had at least one COVID-19 test by now. Our community members had lots of questions about testing when we started offering this service. We were able to answer everyone's burning questions about getting a COVID-19 test, and many people even shared stories of their positive experiences with our testing teams.

"Been tested by [Banyule Community Health] twice and they were very good."

"I got tested [at Banyule Community Health] Saturday morning last week... results were super quick, and I only waited in line for 30 mins to be tested."

"Thanks to the lovely team who tested our 13-year-old this morning. Friendly, calming, and fast-moving queue."

Banyule Community Health has become a trusted source of health information for our community, striving to provide everyone with accurate and up-to-date information. It always helps to include some familiar faces in our online content, and seeing someone you recognise from the centre can really help get a message across. We invite you to have your say on our Facebook page. Please remember to be respectful, and send a private message if your question contains sensitive information.



Community engagement, online & offline

Over the past 12 months, the many diverse groups in our community have been keeping busy with a range of projects.

Young leaders from our Himilo Community Connect program started 'Masks for Melbourne', a social enterprise that produced and distributed reusable face masks to vulnerable community members. Many masks were also sold to fund food relief for those in need.

As Covid-19 testing ramped up across Melbourne, many of our little ones were getting their first test. We worked with a student from the Pavilion School to design a range of certificates for kids to receive after their test – we've given out dozens of certificates so far!

Our Youth Foundations project has really embraced technology and working online. Some of their projects include a chess club, an original podcast series, and an online playgroup for young parents!

Our 'We Love Stories' program has also found creative ways to use technology for supporting our community. Kids, families, and carers have been tuning in for online story time sessions, reading tips, and fun live videos. Community members have given lots of positive feedback about the program.

"I quite like it because it's not just for the kids, it's for you as well. It's something that you get to look forward to."

"It has been useful, we really like the information."

"[My daughter] has developmental delays, her language was quite difficult to understand [...] from the songs and the books and everything, and the extra time we were putting into doing something, that little bit extra really helped her communication."



Out of Home Care Program



Banyule Community Health has been working alongside a consortium of health services to provide much-needed care for vulnerable children. For many kids, accessing health services can be a daunting process. It's not enough to give someone a pamphlet, they need to be guided through the services available to them. The Out of Home Care Program helped severely disadvantaged children access the services they need, and guided them through this process.

Banyule Community Health became the 'HealthHub' for the Out of Home Care program, which meant we could provide health assessments, referrals, and management plans for children entering the program. 33 children were referred to

the service, with most children able to access services from Banyule Community Health.

Staff involved in Out of Home Care have said

"The program took an innovative approach to address the diverse needs of vulnerable kids in our community".

The Out of Home Care team was with these children every step of the way, helping them reach their full potential while focusing on their long-term health outcomes.

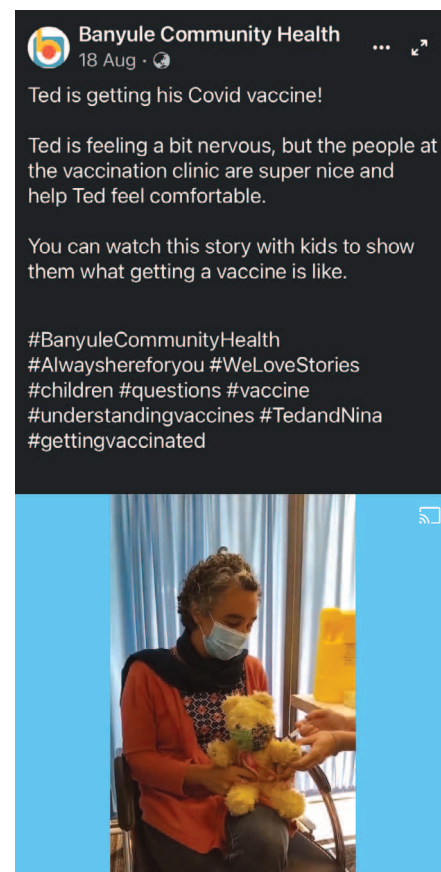
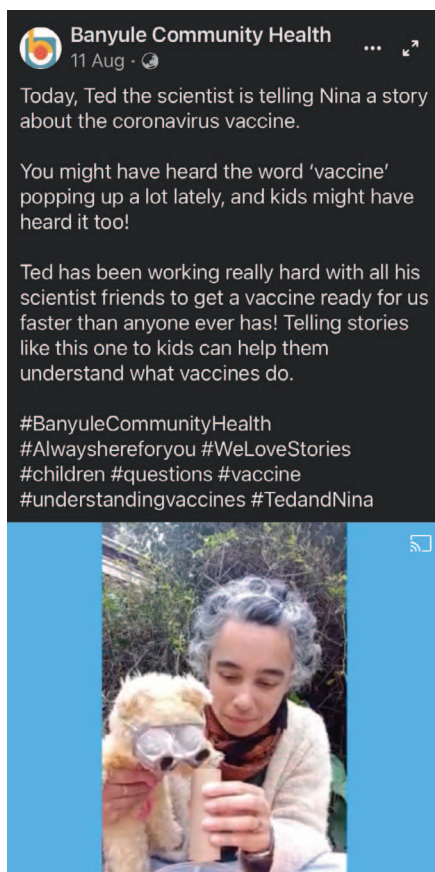


We Love Stories

Nina and Ted COVID-19 videos

Click on the link below to see a series of short videos created by our We Love Stories team that were posted on the Banyule Community Health Facebook Page to support children, parents and carers talk about COVID-19 and vaccination. They include

- It's Dr. Ted! Nina is asking Dr Ted some questions about the Covid vaccine.
<https://www.facebook.com/BanyuleCommunityHealthService/videos/853274595626127>
- Today, Ted the scientist is telling Nina a story about the coronavirus vaccine.
<https://www.facebook.com/BanyuleCommunityHealthService/videos/184117440310457>
- Ted is getting his Covid vaccine!
<https://www.facebook.com/BanyuleCommunityHealthService/videos/344169160713849>
- What's that flying through the sky? It's Ted the Vaccine Hero!
<https://www.facebook.com/BanyuleCommunityHealthService/videos/969468757119852>



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme is supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Visit www.dss.gov.au for more information.

Although funding for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.

ACCREDITATION:

Banyule Community Health currently meets all the accreditation standards of and complies with:

Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL)
Diagnostic Imaging Accreditation Scheme (DIAS)
Community Legal Centres Australia (CLCA)
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHS)
Quality Improvement Council (QIC)
Aged Care Quality Standards (ACQS)
Child Safe Standards

You can also find us online
www.bchs.org.au

Email: banyule@bchs.org.au

Twitter: @banyulechs

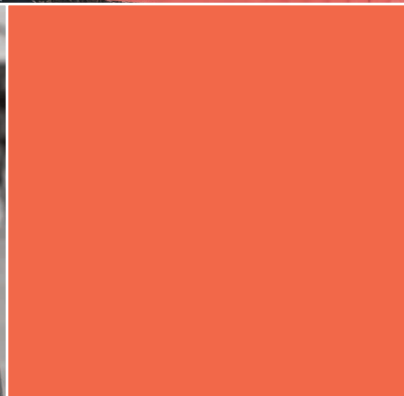
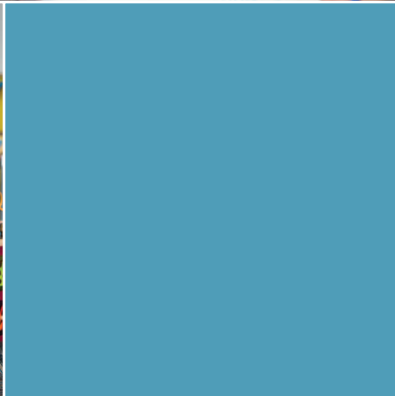
Facebook: [banyulecommunityhealthservice](https://www.facebook.com/banyulecommunityhealthservice)

LinkedIn: [banyule community health](https://www.linkedin.com/company/banyule-community-health)



**Banyule
Community
Health**

Always here for you



**Banyule
Community
Health**

Banyule Community Health
ACN 135 660 454 ABN 87 776 964 889

21 Alamein Road, West Heidelberg, Victoria 3081

T 03 9450 2000

F 03 9459 5808

E banyule@bchs.org.au

 @banyulechs
 banyulecommunityhealthservice
 banyule community health

bchs.org.au